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PRESS RELEASE

19 January 2016

Burkina Faso: Devastating news of the deaths of Leila Alaoui and Mahamadi Ouédraogo

It is with great sadness that Amnesty International has learned of the tragic death of photographer Leila Alaoui and driver Mahamadi Ouédraogo, as a result of the Al Qaeda attack in Ouagadougou on Friday.

Leila was shot twice, in the leg and thorax, but was quickly taken to hospital and was initially in a stable condition following an operation. A medical evacuation was being prepared when she suffered a fatal heart attack.

Leila was a talented French-Moroccan photographer who we had sent to Burkina Faso to carry out a photographic assignment focusing on women's rights.

Mahamadi was killed in his car. A father of four, he was a great friend to Amnesty International having accompanied staff and consultants on missions in the country since

2008. Our thoughts are with his wife, children and family. He will be sorely missed.

Amnesty International's absolute priority is to ensure the best possible support for Mahamadi and Leila's families. The organization's representatives are at the hospital liaising with her family, doctors and all necessary officials.

Mahamadi and Leila were parked outside the Cappucino cafe, opposite the Hotel Splendid when the attack occurred.

Ouagadougou was not considered to be a high risk destination and Leila was being supported by colleagues from our national office in Burkina Faso during her assignment and accompanied by Mahamadi, a national of Burkina Faso.

The organization condemns the vicious attack on civilians in Ouagadougou, which has killed and injured dozens of people of many nationalities and faiths.

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